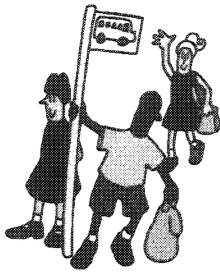


## ***An Introduction***

### **Module 3: Step Up and Step Out**

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**step Up and Step Out to  
make a difference!**

**You've stepped back in time to get an idea of how the community can work together to make a difference, but now take the first *Step Up and Step Out* to learn about guidelines in this manual.**



#### **What is *Step Up and Step Out*?**



**It is a school-based community initiative to increase opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity choices everywhere people live, learn, and play.**

In order to increase opportunities for healthy choices, actions must be taken in as many areas of daily life as possible. The process of changing factors individuals encounter every day is called “changing the environment.” The environment can be changed physically such as adding a new community fitness center, or it can be changed in less obvious and costly ways, such as adding a healthy food choice to a basketball concession stand.

The emphasis of **Step Up and Step Out** is creating environmental changes in schools and community through community involvement, and in small steps without using a large number of resources. **Step Up and Step Out** identifies four “components” that are key to making environmental changes. Each component represents a focus for creating changes.



## ***Step Up and Step Out Components***



### **1. The Community**

Community involvement is key to the concept. Involvement goes beyond supporting actions taken in schools to creating community changes and modeling healthy choices.

### **2. Nutrition Education**

A focus on increasing nutrition education and awareness within the community as well as the school so that healthy messages are repeated everywhere kids live, learn, and play.

### **3. Physical Activity**

A focus on increasing opportunities for noncompetitive activity inside and outside of school.

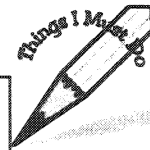
### **4. School Meals**

This focus goes beyond being school-based. It emphasizes opportunities to link school meals with other segments of the school and community.

The four components are equally important. Linking one to another will ensure a repetitive healthy message.



## ***The basic steps for beginning Step Up and Step Out***



- 1. Begin to network with those you know**
- 2. Form a team of people who share a mission to make healthy choices a habit**
- 3. Check what exists in your community before creating changes**
- 4. Take actions to create opportunities for healthy eating and activity choices**
- 5. Appreciate, recognize, and celebrate success**



## How are the steps taken?



1. **Begin to network with those you know**
  - **How do you begin?**
    - ♥ Talk with family and friends
    - ♥ Identify individuals at school who share your interest
    - ♥ Identify others in the community who share your interest
2. **Form a team of interested people who share a mission to make healthy choices a habit**
  - **Who belongs to the team?**
    - ♥ The team is made-up of anyone who is interested! Your efforts are *most* successful when people from all different areas of the community partner to form a team that shares ideas and resources. Begin coalition planning with a “core group” composed of at least one person from each of the four components.
    - ♥ Team members can include school administrators, teachers, food service personnel, physicians, recreation directors, moms, dads, agencies, city leaders, restaurants, businesses, daycare centers, newspapers, and college students
  - **What makes the team successful?**
    - ♥ People working toward a common goal
    - ♥ Good leadership
    - ♥ Regular meetings where people have an opportunity to initiate actions in a setting that values and recognizes their contributions
    - ♥ Active involvement of new team members
    - ♥ Ongoing efforts to search for situations that have benefit or reward for everyone involved
3. **Check to see what already exists in your community before creating changes**
  - Focus on small steps by using...or slightly changing...existing community resources or programs to save time, effort, and money, with big results!
  - Find existing opportunities...where do children and families live, learn, and play?

- ♥ Community events...Fall Festivals, Spring Flings, and everything in-between
- ♥ School practices and curriculum
- ♥ Business and agency programs and practices

**4. Take actions to create opportunities for healthy eating and activity choices**

- The actions are visible, have direct community support, and require minimal resources!
- Actions are made by:
  - ♥ Creating awareness and education
  - ♥ Repeating messages at different times and in different situations
  - ♥ Changing or developing policies
  - ♥ Providing support for those making changes
  - ♥ Rewarding even small steps
  - ♥ Collaborating...or in other words...teamwork
- School actions include:
  - ♥ Student involvement
  - ♥ Increased healthy choices for school meals
  - ♥ Fun, hands-on nutrition education
  - ♥ Life-time physical activity skills
  - ♥ A chance to practice what is learned about healthy choices
  - ♥ Healthy choice role models
  - ♥ Administrative support
- Community actions for increasing healthy habits:
  - ♥ Are unlimited...actions can be everywhere kids work, learn, and play
  - ♥ Include as many people as possible
  - ♥ Are marketed to build enthusiasm and to make sure everyone benefits

**5. Appreciate, recognize, and celebrate success**

- Success occurs whenever
  - ♥ The mission of making healthy choices a habit is clearly communicated.
  - ♥ Time is taken to recognize and problem-solve anything that might limit success. A lack of communication, time, facilities, or interest

may keep actions from reaching their potential, but a little creative thinking can usually eliminate minor stumbling blocks!

- ♥ You and others are able to model, or practice in daily life, the changes you wish to create.
- ♥ Everyone understands and supports the actions for healthy change.



### ***Key Step Up and Step Out words and terms***

You will see several keywords and terms throughout the manual. They are discussed in more detail through the manual, but are so important to the understanding of the Step Up and Step Out model that they are introduced here.

#### **Module Glossary:**

***Environmental Change Methods:*** These are the methods that are used to create the environmental changes. They are actions such as affecting policy, collaboration, repetition, education, support, and reward.

***Initiative Coordinator:*** A person whose primary task is to facilitate communication, organization, and action. This person works with other coalition leaders to share responsibilities.

***School-based Community Initiative: Step Up and Step Out—***joining community and school to form a coalition for the purpose of increasing healthy choices everywhere children live, learn, and play.

***Marketing and Modeling (M-and-M's):*** Taking action to create awareness, or to sell an idea, practice, or product, and practicing in daily life, the changes you wish to create.



## Money matters? \$ \$ \$



Of course money does matter, so it is reasonable for people to ask just how much it costs to begin an initiative like this. **Step Up and Step Out** began with grant funds. However, one the goals of Kansas LEAN and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment has always been to reduce the level of technical and financial assistance needed, so that the initiative could be made available to all interested communities. Now that the **Step Up and Step Out** model is shown to be effective, future support will be provided using this manual as a training tool. Communities will need to look within to find financial resources. It doesn't require much, and becomes easier when the coalition identifies ways partners who make contributions can benefit from doing so.

There are several good reasons communities should *not rely* on funding sources to begin a similar initiative:

- It is too easy to view the initiative with a beginning and an end if there is time-limited funding. This makes it more difficult to create a lasting initiative that can stand on its own when funding ends.
- There is more ownership of the initiative when team members seek and pool available community resources.
- Delegating tasks among a number of team members becomes more acceptable when everyone shares responsibilities. This is not always the case if funding allows for a "salaried" coordinator position.
- Creativity for brainstorming possibilities for environmental change is not limited by money if there is an attitude that the money can be found one way or another within the community!

Yes, some money will be helpful, particularly to provide resource materials for teaching nutrition or physical activity skills. But these are not cost prohibitive. It just takes some partnering and sharing of available resources to accomplish most of the actions recommended in this manual.



## More than a "project!"

Although sometimes called, a "project" **Step Up and Step Out** is so much more! Most "projects" have a beginning and an end, unlike **Step Up and Step Out** and our commitment to making a difference for our children.



**Are there applications for the manual other than  
school health?**



This is a question the **Step Up and Step Out** team asked while writing the manual. It is our belief that the manual *can* be used for communities wanting to form a coalition for reasons other than school health.

The manual *is* written based on experiences and “lessons learned” from a school-based community initiative. However strong community support and involvement is key to reaching goals for healthy children. For that reason, any effort to build a coalition can benefit from the tools provided.

The examples and activities given in the manual are related to healthy eating and physical activity. While they may not directly apply to every purpose for building community coalitions, they are examples to which we can certainly all relate!



**When given a few tools to accomplish these steps,  
the desire to make a difference for kids  
and a supportive team, you will succeed!**

